

IVY

LEAVES

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driving I-85

driving I-85 at night at seventy miles an hour strips
the mind of reason/grips the body in stark fear
harnessed in the right seat eyes mesmerized by one
shining ray unfolding mile after mile not daring to
look from side to side but straight ahead like a puppet
hands seeking something to hold onto other than a seat
belt visioning metal upon metal slamming into each other
like box cars off the rails like a child's blocks stacked
end to end collapsing in a tangled heap like an arrow
released from a bow or a bullet to a target like fleeing
from the devil like fleeing from the devil like fleeing
from the devil

Margaret Hayes

Mon grand-père

Papa, walking stick in hand
blessed the fruit of his loins
with the palm tree's sweet wine.
He made music with a bamboo stalk,
gnarled, carved in his youth —
and lulled the night to rhythmic slumber.
The full moon gazed, entranced
by the poignant melody of this primeval soul,
whose brown eyes retold a century of earthy splendor,
whose wrinkled face, upon breathing its last
quietly smiled.

Ada Ezeokoli

The House

Up on the hill, its skeletal remains
stand, waiting for someone or something
to disturb its peaceful slumber. But who would
come to a place that seems almost haunted —

with shadows that run across the floor
as you walk by, wind that howls through
the open walls and doors.
Rain falling onto the open floors,

lightning flashes across the sky —
leaving all who see this great sight
feeling both horror and wonder.
Where is this place —

One lone tree stands in the yard,
no branches only a trunk pointing
upward, a perching spot for crows
to watch as cars pass by on this

dirt road, sending dust and gravel
into the empty yard. Tall grasses
growing, making it impossible to see
the animals hiding in wait —

The house is on a hill, looking over
the many people below, haunting some
with each clap of thunder causing them
to shudder in fear.

Maybe we should all take a moment
and look up at these remains
with respect and even fright
then quickly run away.

Mary Morris



Miles

linoleum print

12"x12"

Stacy Coleman

Epitaph

Stranger, look upon this marker and smile
in the knowledge of the exceeding abundance
of my life. Not that it was easy,
but richly blessed;
not that I overcame the world,
but that I now go on
to be with the One who did.

John Lyons

Les Saisons

Trees spew forth fire,
Valleys rage with shifting hues...
White death, backstage, smiles.

Outside children frost,
Taste fluffy drifts of white rain...
Angels sifting salt.

Frozen breath escapes,
Tanned skin on white sand beckons...
Birds pen their lyrics.

Ada Ezeokoli

Sleeping through class. . . .

Stay open little eyes
You gotta make it through this class.
Dry erase and chalkboards blur
As my coffee wears off at last.
I'm drifting into oblivion
Where no science teacher exists
And no one can remember
How many classes I have missed.

Beri Hancock



Marriage

oil on panel with cheese cloth

5'x3'4"

Allison Holdredge

The Bagel Shop

At the door, I pause before entering
considering the sanity of myself and those inside,
this assorted group of early risers —
perfectly brewed coffee and bagels —

that defy the still-slumbering world
inside a solitary light among a town of dark storefronts.
Not that we'd choose
to sleep in for hours and if given the option,

we would stick to our tradition,
rising before the sun like the fresh bagels
to experience the familiar consistency
that suspends daily chaos

allowing us to prepare for the day,
one hurried task after another
where we can, for just a few moments,
peacefully sip our cream and sugar-laden coffee.

It's just that the eyes of the tired looking clerk
that never seems to muster a smile,
the salesman's neatly pressed suit and tie
and the wrinkled T-shirt of a man

proudly displaying his forearm tattoo...
and when you consider the hour,
the random collection of lives,
and the infinite possibilities that will meet us when we leave...

well, I can't help but appreciate the purpose each of us
has even in being here
this, our only shared experience of the day
to unknowingly acknowledge our common ground.

Jill Moore

A Feeling of Home

Sometimes when I pass by a particular house,
I suddenly feel sad and lonely.
Though it is a house I've never lived in,
never even entered,
something about its look brings back
a happiness I've known sometime,
somewhere in the past.
It is a feeling of home,
a memory of my own that clings
to the place,
as intangible as a wish,
as solid as a stone.
It is as if I've been away and left
behind something or someone meaningful,
and now have come back to the things
I lost for a while.
It fills my soul with a wistfulness
I don't often feel, but somehow
it is as if arms I once trusted
beckon me back,
and a voice calls to welcome me,
and I wish with all my heart it were
my house, my home —
that childhood place no one can ever
take away or completely forget.
It is the joy of being a child again
with the innocence and trust one feels
so little as time escapes us,
which hasn't grown up as I have,
nor become cautious as I have,
but remains forever sealed in the heart,
remembered simply as love.

Margaret Hayes

Confessions

They tell the story when I, at 4
Climbed into Frances' crib and cut her curls
When left alone for just a moment.
"What happened to this baby's hair?"
Mother laughs as she repeats my ready lie.
Looking straight into her eyes without blinking,
Holding her scissors behind me, covered in curls,
"The rats did it," I answer.

My conscience was born when I, at 4
Was laid down for a needed nap
Among coats and handbags of visiting aunts.
Sparkling coin purses inside handbags beckoned.
First a penny from each, then a dime,
Then guilt, remorse for all of my life.
Did they find out and silently shame me?
I always worried, "did they know?"

Joyce Stein



Hinduism

acrylic on wood

24"x24"

Lashanda Salters

A Confession

I once ripped the mirror
off my parent's car, trying
to park it in the narrow garage.
To avoid my father's wrath,
I tried to fix it with help from a friend
who knew all sorts of things about cars.
I thought we had done a good job
And reveled in my success until the next day
when my father was driving to work and
the mirror fell off
at a stop sign.

I convinced my younger sister
To give me her new crisp
dollar bill, in exchange for
a magic quarter.
I could buy so much more with a dollar
Than I could with twenty-five cents.
I was quite proud of myself for
outsmarting a six year old until she
showed to Mom the "magic" quarter.

Andrew Anderson

Solitary

I walk over flattened, shining leaves,
Through a lamplit stretch of parking lot.
My hand, as if reaching to scratch
A phantom itch, searches to hold your hand.

I look down the lot —
I am acquainted with every step I will take,
Trudging through a photograph
I've seen too many times...

I pull my step before crushing a red bloom
Resting in the sea of trodden foliage.
I cannot fathom why, only how solitary,
Like a drop of blood in a field of snow.

Forgetting myself I lift up the flower,
Chagrinned as my careful fingers crack
The stiffened petals,
Dry as a desert.

There is nothing more to know.
I cinch my grip over the dried rose,
And it crackles like a fire in my hand.

Allison Holdredge

Music Box

On a stage of velvet, gracefully twirling,
A miniature ballerina weaves dreams for
Tiny hearts. Her porcelain flesh draped in a
Gossamer fabric, forever frozen in time.

Arms posed above her head, as if she is
Ready to take flight, instead of racing
Around and around her lonely stage.

The haunting music of a forgotten
Composer rises from beneath her feet
Racing to keep up with her, then slowing
And stopping an instant before she does.

Tiny hands reach out to start the dance again,
They slip and the music box crashes to the floor.
The ballerina races out of control. The music
Gets louder and louder, then suddenly —
Silence.

LaTonya Scott



Brice

oil on canvas

74"x41"

Carter Baston

Life is a merry-go-round
Constantly moving, until
That one moment,
You lose your grasp,
And fly off —
Hitting the pavement.

I super glued myself to the bars,
Hoping to be the last person there.
Then a persistent idiot with the same
Idea, doused my hands in acetone
And I hit the pavement —
Head first.

LaTonya Scott

Outside the air has
Settled in the crystal cold
Of winter evening.

The rasping crawl of
Fallen leaves rakes along a
Midnight parking lot.

As the door clicks shut,
I draw ice into my lungs,
And cling to my arms.

Allison Holdredge

Cats'll eat tuna
'Ere they'll taste a spoon o'
Anything else in the fridge.

"Cats won't touch boiled cabbage,"
To coin a new adage,
But they'll help with the bacon a smidge.

Cats won't take their vitamins.
Why just the sight of 'em's
Enough to make my kitty cringe.

But give her a spider
That'll fight back and bite her,
She purrs, "O, what a heavenly binge."

Angie Owens

The carnival sits in the valley
A faded rainbow in the midst
Of nature's green.
Lights as bright as the sun once blinked here
High above brilliant patchworks of tents
That held within their folds
Throngs of excitement.
Mechanical rides soared, the creaking machinery
Mixing with the jovial sound of music
And the delighted voices of crowds exclaiming
Over the unusual and exhilarating.
Children laughed —
Candy coated, sticky joy —
At sights of delight.

Their voices still drift in the wind,
A haunting sound chanting through the trees.
Left behind are
Faded booths and abandoned rides,
Broken lights and tattered tents
Forlorn,
Left for reasons forgotten,
Nothing but a memory
That will always exist.

Wendy Morgan



Fumie

oil on canvas

28"x34"

Tracy West



